

Sh'mirat Ha-guf: Jewish Pathways to Health, Longevity and Vitality

Our modern society has the highest rates of obesity and chronic diseases of any culture in the history of the world despite (or because of?) our advanced levels of medicine and technology. Many people are turning to ancestral approaches like Paleo and other whole foods lifestyles. Judaism, however, has its own ancestral paradigm for health and physical well being. The Torah instructs us to: “Guard yourself and guard your soul very carefully” (Deuteronomy 4:9). This is the commandment of Sh'mirat Ha-guf.

Maimonides wrote: “maintaining a healthy body is among the ways of serving God, since it is impossible for one who is not healthy to understand or know anything of the Creator. Therefore, one must distance oneself from things which harm the body, and accustom oneself to the things which strengthen and make one healthy”. In this class, we will survey 3,000 years of Biblical, Talmudic, Medieval and Modern Jewish expertise with a heavy dose of Maimonides.

Course Description: 4 sessions with an optional field trip. Presenting and discussing the 4 pillars of a healthy Jewish lifestyle: Wine, Food, Hygiene and Massage, and Movement. There will be a lecture/discussion and workshop each week. Each session will be 60 to 90 minutes in length. Class is free to all. A one time \$10 “lab fee” is requested to cover the weekly class beverages, foods, and materials.

December 5: Wine: Sanctification, Celebration, and Medicine for the Body and Soul
Workshop: A guided wine tasting

December 12: You Shall Eat and be Satisfied: Changing dietary patterns from Biblical Judea to the Diaspora
Workshop: Instruction and demonstrations in the preparation of fermented foods and beverages in the home: pickled vegetables, sauerkraut, Kambucha and Kefir.

December 19: A Shvitz and a Plaitza...what a Mechaye!
A 3,000 year History of Jewish Communal Bathing and Massage
Workshop: See optional Field trip

January 3: Games, Sports and Exercise in the Torah and Talmud
Workshop: Dr. Rambam's Miraculous Morning Workout
Demonstrations of simple exercises, strength training, and stretching that can be performed at home.

TBA Optional Field Trip in January, 2017
Trip to to Dr. Wilkerson's Mud Baths in Calistoga with Lunch
Your choice of a Mud bath and/or Warm Mineral Water Bath and/or steam bath and/or massage. Discounted treatment packages available.

Course instructor is Jeff Sternfeld with assistance from other presenters.